

Tacoma city waterway project completion report.

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

JULY 1, 1988 - JUNE 30, 1989

COASTAL ZONE PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CONTRACT NO. G0089055

The preparation of this report was financially aided through a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology with funds obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and appropriated for Section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

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CITY OF TACOMA
CITY WATERWAY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
CITY WATERWAY CONCEPT PLAN

The City of Tacoma Coastal Zone Management Grant involved an environmental review of existing conditions along the City Waterway waterfront and the development of a concept plan for the Waterway.

City Waterway is considered one of Tacoma's most important and valuable assets. It is viewed by most segments of the community as a significant resource which has great potential for redevelopment as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Recent planning documents have indicated a desire to improve the physical condition of the Waterway and to promote a change from the industrial orientation of earlier years to an area of water-dependent and water-related commercial, recreational and public facilities. The City Waterway environmental review and Concept Plan were seen as ways to direct these redevelopment efforts.

The CZM project consisted of three work elements. The first element involved a review and summary analysis of existing environmental reports, studies and investigations relative to City Waterway. The second element involved the establishment of a design and development framework for City Waterway.

The third element was the development of the City Waterway Concept Plan. This plan sets forth design guidelines to assist the development of public access/amenities, private developments and circulation improvements. It is a presentation of images, perceptions and ideas about what City Waterway is and can become and provides a format for further study and public discussion leading to a more detailed plan. It is considered the first phase in the development of a comprehensive design plan for City Waterway.

Because of the expediency desired to accomplish the environmental review and to prepare the design and development concept for City Waterway, and the desired expertise; the project involved the use of consultants to conduct technical/environmental research and analysis and to prepare the design and development concept and design guidelines. Planning staff was responsible for grant administration, providing background information and support, coordinating the public comment and review process and directing the development of the Concept Plan.

The entire project was conducted under the direction of the Planning Commission with involvement of the City's Natural Systems Citizens' Advisory Committee.

ELEMENT I - CITY WATERWAY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In November 1988, the firm of Parametrix, Inc. was contracted to conduct a review and summary analysis of existing environmental reports concerning soil and water contamination in the vicinity of City Waterway. This firm conducted

a study and analysis of critical waterfront issues for the City of Tacoma as part of a 1987-88 CZM grant and is currently providing engineering consultant services for design feasibility studies for the proposed City Waterway sediment control facility.

During the second quarter of the contract year, the consultant initiated work on Phase I of this effort - developing an annotated bibliography of studies and sources of information that address the incidences of soil and water contamination in the vicinity of City Waterway. For the purposes of this study, only properties with waterfront frontage were considered; however, investigations identified outside the shoreline area but showing an impact to the City Waterway area were included in the list of available information.

During the third quarter, the consultant met with representatives from the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department, Planning Department, Department of Community Development and the Department of Public Works to discuss any work that had been done by the City to identify soil and water contamination problems in the vicinity of City Waterway. Additional studies performed by outside agencies for private parties were investigated by the consultant and City project staff.

During the final quarter, representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington Department of Ecology were contacted to identify investigations which have been conducted by these organizations and other appropriate studies relative to the City Waterway area.

The consultants reviewed the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department files and identified studies that documented environmental conditions along City Waterway. They also contacted the Puyallup Indian Tribe and the Port of Tacoma to determine further documentation. The City of Tacoma shoreline permit files were also reviewed.

The data and reports were reviewed by City project staff and some changes were necessary to accommodate corrections and new information. The consultant finalized the Phase I report and prepared a Phase II report which mapped and summarized the information from the bibliography. This report describes the current state of information on soil and water contamination in the vicinity of City Waterway and was used in development of the design and development framework and the Concept Plan.

City project staff provided the Tacoma Planning Commission with summaries of the completed work and the information was discussed with the Tacoma City Council.

ELEMENT II - CITY WATERWAY DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

In November 1988, the firm of Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership was contracted to develop a design and development concept for City Waterway. This firm recently developed a master plan for the adjacent Tacoma Union Station District.

During the second quarter of the contract year, the consultant initiated review of relevant background materials, including the Greater Central Business District Plan, the Master Program for Shoreline Development, recent work regarding Union Station and recent consultant reports by Parametrix, Inc. and Jones & Jones regarding City Waterway development opportunities.

During the third quarter, the consultant worked with City project staff to develop background information concerning City Waterway history, context, opportunities and constraints. Input from City Club of Tacoma, the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Board was also utilized.

During the final quarter, information gathered during the review process was interpreted and consolidated into an illustrated design and development concept for the Waterway. Recommendations were included.

A unifying theme, vision and design framework for City Waterway has been identified, including recommendations for strategic public space location and improvements along the Waterway and for the establishment of public policies.

Sub-districts have been identified within the City Waterway area in relation to public and private property.

Recommendations have been identified for development of vehicular, pedestrian, transit and maritime linkages between the City Waterway sub-districts and from the Waterway to surrounding districts, particularly the Central Business District.

The proposed design and development framework was reviewed with the Planning Commission and modified based on review. This information then became the basis for the City Waterway Concept Plan.

ELEMENT III - CITY WATERWAY CONCEPT PLAN

Development of the City Waterway Concept Plan occurred during the final quarter of the contract year and used adopted plans and programs, consultants' reports and the conclusions and recommendations of Elements I and II.

Existing conditions were assessed. Potential problems and opportunities were identified. Existing policies for public and private properties were reviewed. Conceptual ideas were proposed for public spaces and guidelines for public amenities and access were proposed.

As part of this process, a series of workshops were held involving all City departments, the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma, the Port of Tacoma, the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department and Pierce Transit. Major issues were discussed and goals or solutions sought. The result was an administrative position or goal statement regarding major issues facing the Waterway. These goals reflect the input of the public through related planning activities such as the Union Station District Master Plan and the Greater Central Business District Plan.

Design guidelines were recommended for access/amenities, public and private development and circulation improvements. A community meeting of City Waterway business and property owners and interested citizens was held to explain the proposed development concept and to solicit thoughts and comments. The guidelines and draft concept were reviewed by the Planning Commission. The plan was modified based on review and discussed with the Tacoma City Council at a joint City Council/Planning Commission study session.

The final Concept Plan affirms the Master Program for Shoreline Development intent to encourage reuse and redevelopment of the area and to provide a direction for further guidance for land use decisions and for administering shoreline permits.

The Plan emphasizes City Waterway as a unified urban waterfront. Design is a strong emphasis and policies encourage a visual continuity for the waterfront. Each element of the plan seeks to target issues, identify opportunities and constraints, and suggest policies that will implement the goals of the plan.

The plan will be accepted by the Planning Commission and the City Council as the direction of the City and its redevelopment efforts for the Waterway.

ABSTRACT

Title: City Waterway Environmental Review - Phase I and Phase II Reports

Author: Parametrix, Inc.
13020 Northup Way
Bellevue, WA 98005

Subject: City Waterway Shoreline District

Date: June 1989

Prepared For: City of Tacoma, Planning Department

Source of Copies: Tacoma Planning Department
747 Market Street, Room 900
Tacoma, WA 98402
(206) 591-5363

Project No.: G0089055

Number of Pages: 65

Abstract:

City Waterway Environmental Review, Phase I and Phase II Reports is a compilation of two study documents that examine environmental conditions on upland sites in Tacoma's City Waterway. These reports provide a review and summary analysis of existing environmental reports, studies and investigations relative to the Waterway.

The Phase I report provides an introduction to the study, lists and maps properties adjacent to City Waterway, and includes an annotated bibliography for data on contaminated upland sites.

The bibliography references and summarizes 55 sources of information. It includes data from the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department, Planning Department, Department of Community Development and the Department of Public Works. And it summarizes additional studies performed by outside agencies for private parties.

It also references relevant Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Ecology, Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department and City of Tacoma files.

The Phase II Report summarizes the information in the bibliography. It lists and maps City Waterway properties with environmental data and notes properties with documented presence of contaminants, questionable or possible presence of contaminants and documented absence of contaminants.

The report draws a series of conclusions from available information:

- Significant progress has been made toward remediating the three most contaminated sites on the Waterway.
- In two instances, actual site investigations have shown that the soils are clean.
- Very little additional data is available on other properties.

A series of recommendations are proposed:

- Conduct a thorough historical review to document past land use activities.
- Initiate testing on properties.
- Work with property owners and public agencies to identify problem and clean areas.

ABSTRACT

Title: City Waterway Design and Development Framework

Author: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership
1505 Western Avenue, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101

Subject: City Waterway Shoreline District

Date: April 1989

Prepared For: City of Tacoma, Planning Department

Source of Copies: Tacoma Planning Department
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Project No.: G0089055

Number of Pages: 31

Abstract:

The City Waterway Design and Development Framework is a report which includes an illustrated set of recommendations and sketches of City Waterway to illustrate a "vision" of potential development. It was developed to assist the City of Tacoma in establishing a design concept for City Waterway and setting forth design guidelines useful in the development of public access/amenities, private development and circulation improvements.

The report is based on the adopted policy and intent of the City as established in the Greater Central Business District Plan, the Master Program for Shoreline Development and the City Waterway Policy Plan. It contains background information concerning City Waterway history, context and opportunities and constraints.

This information is interpreted and consolidated into an illustrated design and development concept for the Waterway. Design guidelines for open space, circulation and parking, landscaping, materials and furnishings, signage and lighting are proposed.

A unifying theme, vision and design framework is identified; including recommendations for strategic public space locations and improvements along the Waterway and for the establishment of public policies.

Sub-districts are identified within the City Waterway area in relation to public and private properties.

Recommendations are identified for development of vehicular, pedestrian, transit and maritime linkages between the Waterway sub-districts and from the Waterway to surrounding districts, particularly the Central Business District.

The design and development framework forms the basis for the City Waterway Concept Plan.

ABSTRACT

Title: City Waterway Concept Plan
Author: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership
1505 Western Avenue, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101
Subject: City Waterway Shoreline District
Date: June 1989
Prepared For: City of Tacoma, Planning Department
Source of Copies: Tacoma Planning Department
747 Market Street, Room 900
Tacoma, WA 98402
(206) 591-5363
Project No.: G0089055
Number of Pages: 30

Abstract:

The City Waterway Concept Plan is a report which outlines the City of Tacoma's vision of potential development along City Waterway. The plan underscores the City's desire to improve the physical condition of the Waterway and to promote a change from the industrial orientation of earlier years to an area of water-dependent and water-related commercial, recreational and public facilities.

It synthesizes the information on City Waterway, proposes a design concept that will attract private investment and public support for redevelopment efforts and sets forth guidelines useful in the development of public access/amenities, private development and circulation improvements. These guidelines will become the basis for reviewing both public and private development proposals along the Waterway.

The plan is the first phase in the development of a comprehensive design and development plan for City Waterway. It is a presentation of images, perceptions and ideas about what City Waterway is and can become and it provides a framework for further study and public discussion leading to a more detailed final plan.

The plan affirms the Master Program for Shoreline Development intent to encourage reuse and redevelopment of the area and to provide a direction for further guidance for land use decisions and for administering shoreline permits.

The plan emphasizes City Waterway as a unified urban waterfront. Design is a strong emphasis and policies encourage a visual continuity for the waterfront. Each element of the plan seeks to target issues, identify opportunities and constraints, and suggest policies that will implement the goals of the plan.

The following goals have been established:

- Develop a design theme and concept for redevelopment.
- Evaluate and improve environmental conditions.
- Develop a comprehensive circulation plan.
- Improve and expand public access.
- Develop marinas and transient moorage facilities along City Waterway.
- Increase the amount of park space and open space.
- Establish a strong visible presence.
- Develop a strategy for implementation.

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